

(12) INTERNATIONAL APPLICATION PUBLISHED UNDER THE PATENT COOPERATION TREATY (PCT)

(19) World Intellectual Property Organization
International Bureau



(43) International Publication Date
19 September 2002 (19.09.2002)

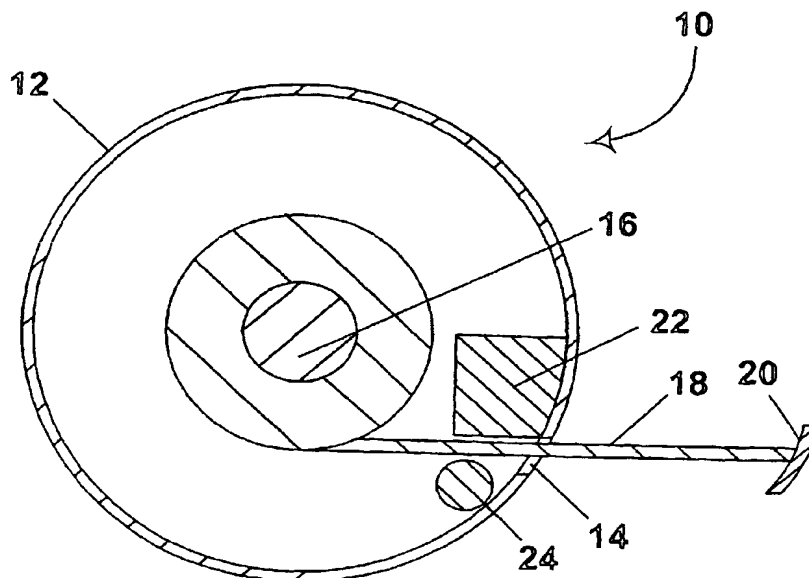
PCT

(10) International Publication Number
WO 02/073572 A2

- (51) International Patent Classification⁷: G09F 9/37, 11/02, 7/10 (74) Agent: COLE, David, John; E INK Corporation, 733 Concord Avenue, Cambridge, MA 02138-1002 (US).
- (21) International Application Number: PCT/US02/07545 (81) Designated States (*national*): AE, AG, AL, AM, AT, AU, AZ, BA, BB, BG, BR, BY, BZ, CA, CH, CN, CO, CR, CU, CZ, DE, DK, DM, DZ, EC, EE, ES, FI, GB, GD, GE, GH, GM, HR, HU, ID, IL, IN, IS, JP, KE, KG, KP, KR, KZ, LC, LK, LR, LS, LT, LU, LV, MA, MD, MG, MK, MN, MW, MX, MZ, NO, NZ, OM, PH, PL, PT, RO, RU, SD, SE, SG, SI, SK, SL, TJ, TM, TN, TR, TT, TZ, UA, UG, UZ, VN, YU, ZA, ZM, ZW.
- (22) International Filing Date: 13 March 2002 (13.03.2002)
- (25) Filing Language: English
- (26) Publication Language: English
- (30) Priority Data: 60/275,291 13 March 2001 (13.03.2001) US (84) Designated States (*regional*): ARIPO patent (GH, GM, KE, LS, MW, MZ, SD, SL, SZ, TZ, UG, ZM, ZW), Eurasian patent (AM, AZ, BY, KG, KZ, MD, RU, TJ, TM), European patent (AT, BE, CH, CY, DE, DK, ES, FI, FR, GB, GR, IE, IT, LU, MC, NL, PT, SE, TR), OAPI patent (BF, BJ, CF, CG, CI, CM, GA, GN, GQ, GW, ML, MR, NE, SN, TD, TG).
- (71) Applicant: E INK CORPORATION [US/US]; 733 Concord Avenue, Cambridge, MA 02138-1002 (US).
- (72) Inventors: BAUCOM, Allan, Scott; 38 Seaver Road, Townsend, MA 01469 (US). KNAIAN, Ara, N.; 85 Pearl Street, Cambridge, MA 02139 (US). LINDEN, Heather, A.; Apartment No. 711, 10 Magazine Street, Cambridge, MA 02139 (US). O'MALLEY, Timothy, J.; 4 Hillside Avenue, Wakefield, MA 01880 (US). WILCOX, Russell, J.; 17 Winnemay Street, Natick, MA 01760 (US).
- Published:
— without international search report and to be republished upon receipt of that report

[Continued on next page]

(54) Title: APPARATUS FOR DISPLAYING DRAWINGS



(57) Abstract: An apparatus (10) for displaying drawings comprises a housing (12) having an aperture (14), a drawing sheet (18) comprising electro-optic material movable through the aperture (14) between closed and open positions, and a writing device (22) for writing on the sheet (18) as it moved between its closed and open positions. The invention also provides a display comprising an optic medium capable of being changed between two display states, the display having a viewing surface through which an observer can view the medium. A touch screen is disposed on the opposed side of the optic medium from the viewing surface, and the optic medium is deformable such that pressure applied to the viewing surface will be transmitted to the touch screen.

WO 02/073572 A2



For two-letter codes and other abbreviations, refer to the "Guidance Notes on Codes and Abbreviations" appearing at the beginning of each regular issue of the PCT Gazette.

H-318PCT

APPARATUS FOR DISPLAYING DRAWINGS

The present invention relates apparatus for displaying drawings. More specifically, this invention relates to an apparatus for displaying drawings which makes use of a rewritable medium, preferably an electrophoretic medium.

5 The present invention also relates to displays incorporating touch screens.

 The term "drawings" is used herein to cover, *inter alia*, construction drawings, blueprints, architectural drawings, maps, plans, and similar types of technical drawings which may be required, for example, for the assembly, repair and
10 maintenance of machinery.

 Electro-optic displays comprise a layer of electro-optic material, a term which is used herein in its conventional meaning in the art to refer to a material having first and second display states differing in at least one optical property, the material being changed from its first to its second display state by application of an
15 electric field to the material. The optical property is typically color perceptible to the human eye, but may be another optical property, such as optical transmission, reflectance, luminescence or, in the case of displays intended for machine reading, pseudo-color in the sense of a change in reflectance of electromagnetic wavelengths outside the visible range. The electro-optic material may be a particle-based
20 electrophoretic material comprising at least one type of electrically charged particle capable of moving through a suspending fluid upon application of an electric field, and such an electrophoretic material may or may not be encapsulated; see, for example, U.S. Patents Nos. 5,930,026; 5,961,804; 6,017,584; 6,067,185; 6,118,426; 6,120,588; 6,120,839; 6,124,851; 6,130,773; 6,130,774; 6,172,798; 6,177,921; 6,232,950; 6,241,921; 6,249,271; 6,252,564; 6,262,706; 6,262,833; 6,300,932; 25 6,312,304; 6,312,971; 6,323,989; and 6,327,072; U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2001-0045934; and International Applications Publication Nos. WO 97/04398; WO 98/03896; WO 98/19208; WO 98/41898; WO 98/41899; WO 99/10767; WO 99/10768; WO 99/10769; WO 99/47970; WO 99/53371; WO 99/53373; WO 99/56171; WO 99/59101; WO 99/67678; WO 00/03349; WO
30

00/03291; WO 00/05704; WO 00/20921; WO 00/20922; WO 00/20923; WO
00/26761; WO 00/36465; WO 00/36560; WO 00/36666; WO 00/38000; WO
00/38001; WO 00/59625; WO 00/60410; WO 00/67110; WO 00/67327 WO
01/02899; WO 01/07691; WO 01/08241; WO 01/08242; WO 01/17029; WO
5 01/17040; WO 01/17041; WO 01/80287 and WO 02/07216. All of these patents
and published applications are in the name of, or assigned to, the Massachusetts
Institute of Technology (MIT) or E Ink Corporation. Alternatively, the electro-optic
material may be of the rotating bichromal member type as described, for example, in
U.S. Patents Nos. 5,808,783; 5,777,782; 5,760,761; 6,054,071 6,055,091; 6,097,531;
10 6,128,124; 6,137,467; and 6,147,791 (although this type of display is often referred
to as a "rotating bichromal ball" display, the term "rotating bichromal member is
preferred as more accurate since in some of the patents mentioned above the rotating
members are not spherical). The electro-optic medium could also be an
electrochromic medium, for example an electrochromic medium in the form of a
15 nanochromic film comprising an electrode formed at least in part from a semi-
conducting metal oxide and a plurality of dye molecules capable of reversible color
change attached to the electrode; see, for example O'Regan, B., et al., Nature 1991,
353, 737. Nanochromic films of this type are also described, for example, in
International Applications Publication Nos. WO 98/35267 and WO 01/27690. Other
20 types of electro-optic materials, for example, liquid crystals, especially polymer-
dispersed liquid crystals, may also be used in such displays.

Some electro-optic displays can have attributes of good brightness
and contrast, wide viewing angles, state bistability, and low power consumption
when compared with liquid crystal displays. (The terms "bistable" and "bistability"
25 are used herein in their conventional meaning in the art to refer to displays
comprising display elements having first and second display states differing in at
least one optical property, and such that after any given element has been driven, by
means of an addressing pulse of finite duration, to assume either its first or second
display state, after the addressing pulse has terminated, that state will persist for at

least several times, for example at least four times, the minimum duration of the addressing pulse required to change the state of the display element.)

5 An encapsulated, electrophoretic display typically does not suffer from the clustering and settling failure mode of traditional electrophoretic devices and provides further advantages, such as the ability to print or coat the display on a wide variety of flexible and rigid substrates. (Use of the word "printing" is intended to include all forms of printing and coating, including, but without limitation: pre-metered coatings such as patch die coating, slot or extrusion coating, slide or cascade coating, curtain coating; roll coating such as knife over roll coating, forward and reverse roll coating; gravure coating; dip coating; spray coating; meniscus coating; spin coating; brush coating; air knife coating; silk screen printing processes; electrostatic printing processes; thermal printing processes; ink jet printing processes; and other similar techniques.) Thus, the resulting display can be flexible. Further, because the display medium can be printed (using a variety of methods), the display itself can be made inexpensively.

15 It has now been realized that the properties of many electro-optic media, and especially the aforementioned encapsulated electrophoretic media, in particular their rewritable nature and their bistability render such media especially adapted for solving certain problems associated with display of drawings under conditions often experienced in industry (including the construction industry). Accordingly, in one aspect this invention relates to apparatus useful for display of drawings and adapted to take advantage of the properties of such media.

20 Architects, builders and engineers employed in the construction industry working on large projects may require frequent access to hundreds, if not thousands, of drawings, and it is impracticable for them to carry a complete set of such drawings around with them. Although electronic storage of the necessary drawings would appear to be the solution, the display devices conventionally used with electronic storage are not well adapted for either the type of drawings involved or the environment in which they have to be used. Computer monitors based on cathode ray tubes are, of course, too large and heavy, and require too much power, to

be useful to someone moving around a construction site. Liquid crystal displays of the type used in portable computers are sufficiently light in weight and have sufficiently low power consumption for such purposes, but are fragile and difficult to read in sunlight. Furthermore, the maximum size of such displays is limited to about 15 inches diagonal, whereas construction drawings need to be much larger (typically about 24 by 36 inches) in order to show to scale details of a large building or device, and it is difficult to work with such drawings without seeing the whole drawing at once. Finally, construction sites present severe environmental hazards to portable computers, which may be damaged by rain, mud, blowing dust or excessive heat or cold. Similar problems are encountered by others needing access to large numbers of complex drawings, for example aircraft maintenance technicians.

The aforementioned media can readily be produced in the form of large, lightweight, tough rewritable sheets well adapted for display of construction and similar drawings, and such sheets can be incorporated into several types of storage devices which are less susceptible to the environmental hazards of construction sites and similar locations than are conventional portable computers. It is to such storage devices that the present invention relates.

In one aspect, this invention provides a first apparatus for displaying a drawing. This first apparatus comprises a housing having an aperture therein, and a drawing sheet movable through the aperture between a closed position, in which substantially the whole of the drawing sheet lies within the housing, and an open position in which at least a portion of the drawing sheet lies outside the housing. At least a portion of the drawing sheet comprises an electro-optic medium having first and second display states differing in at least one optical property, the medium being changed from its first to its second display state by application of an electric field to the medium. The apparatus also comprises writing means for writing on the electro-optic medium as the drawing sheet is moved from its closed to its open position and thereby producing a drawing on the electro-optic medium. This first apparatus of the invention may hereinafter be referred to as a "tube apparatus", since certain preferred embodiments of this apparatus, such as that illustrated in Figure 1 of the

accompanying drawings, have an external form which resembles a conventional mailing tube. It should be noted, however, that the housing of this first apparatus need not be tubular.

5 In another aspect, this invention provides a second apparatus for displaying a drawing. This second apparatus comprises a display member having a viewing surface, and support means for supporting the display member above a horizontal floor with the viewing surface facing upwardly. The second apparatus further comprises an electro-optic medium having first and second display states differing in at least one optical property, the medium being changed from its first to
10 its second display state by application of an electric field to the medium, this electro-optic medium being disposed on the display member so as to be visible to an observer viewing the viewing surface. The second apparatus also comprises a writing head arranged to write on the electro-optic medium, and drive means for moving the writing head relative to the electro-optic medium. This second apparatus
15 of the invention may hereinafter be referred to as a "table apparatus", since certain preferred embodiments of this apparatus, such as that illustrated in Figure 2 of the accompanying drawings, have an external form which resembles a table.

In another aspect, this invention provides a display comprising an optic medium having a viewing surface through which an observer can view the
20 optic medium and on which the observer can press, the optic medium being changeable between first and second display states differing in at least one optical property on application of a stimulus thereto. The display further comprises a touch screen disposed on the opposed side of the optic medium from the viewing surface, the optic medium being deformable such that pressure applied to the viewing surface
25 is transmitted to the touch screen.

Finally, this invention provides a process for writing on a protected layer of electro-optic material, this protected layer comprising a layer of electro-optic material and a protective envelope substantially completely surrounding the sheet of electro-optic material, the envelope having an openable and recloseable flap
30 which can be opened to permit access to the layer of electro-optic material. This

process also uses a writing apparatus comprising at least two spaced retaining members and a writing head which can be moved between these spaced retaining members. The process comprises opening the flap of the envelope; inserting the spaced retaining members within the envelope, thereby creating a gap between the layer of electro-optic material and one internal surface of the envelope; moving the writing head between the spaced retaining members and thereby writing an image on the layer of electro-optic material; withdrawing the spaced retaining members from the envelope; and reclosing the flap of the envelope.

Figure 1 of the accompanying drawings is a schematic section through a first tube apparatus of the present invention, the section being taken in a plane perpendicular to the axis of the tube apparatus;

Figure 2 is a schematic section, similar to that of Figure 1, through a second tube apparatus of the present invention;

Figure 3 is a schematic vertical section through a table apparatus of the present invention;

Figure 4 is a schematic section through an apparatus of the present invention having a touch screen on the opposed side of an optic medium from a viewing surface; and

Figure 5 is a schematic top plan view of a writing apparatus carrying out the process of the present invention.

The accompanying drawings are not strictly to scale, emphasis instead generally being placed upon illustrating the principles of the invention.

As already mentioned, in a first aspect this invention provides a "tube" apparatus for displaying a drawing, this apparatus comprising a housing having an aperture therein, and a drawing sheet movable through the aperture between an open and a closed position. An electro-optic medium having first and second display states differing in at least one optical characteristic is provided on the sheet, and the apparatus comprises writing means for writing on the electro-optic medium as the sheet is being moved from its closed to its open position.

This tube apparatus of the invention may have a rotatable spindle disposed within the housing, the drawing sheet, when in its closed position, being wound around the spindle, the drawing sheet being moved from its closed to its open position by being unwound from the spindle. In a preferred form of such a tube apparatus, the housing is substantially cylindrical, the spindle has an axis of rotation substantially parallel to the axis of the housing, and the aperture has the form of an elongate slot extending substantially parallel to the axis of the housing. The apparatus is conveniently provided with retraction means to retract the drawing sheet from its open to its closed position, and may also be provided with latching means having a latched position, in which the latching means prevent the retracting means retracting the drawing sheet from its open to its closed position, and an unlatched position, in which the latching means permits the retracting means to retract the drawing sheet from its open to its closed position. Conveniently, the writing means is mounted on the housing adjacent the aperture. The writing means may place upon the electro-optic medium an electrostatic charge which persists after the electro-optic medium has passed the writing means; this helps to retain the drawing on the electro-optic medium for the maximum time. The writing means may comprise a conductive member provided with biasing means arranged to bias the conductive member into contact with the drawing sheet as the writing means is writing on the drawing sheet, so that the conductive member forms one electrode of the writing means. Alternatively, at least the portion of the drawing sheet bearing the electro-optic medium may comprise a conductive layer to function as one electrode of the writing means.

In such a tube apparatus, a closure member may be secured to the drawing sheet in a position such that, when the drawing sheet is in its closed position, the closure member substantially closes the aperture, thus helping to prevent dust and dirt entering the housing when the drawing sheet is in its closed position. The apparatus may comprise data storage means for storing data representing a plurality of drawings, and data selection means for selecting at least

one of this plurality of drawings for writing by the writing means on to the display sheet.

When the tube apparatus is to be used in dirty or dusty environments, as will often be the case on construction sites, it will often be advantageous to provide a protective sheet covering the electro-optic medium. Since it may be difficult or impossible to write on the medium with the protective layer in place, the protective layer may be separable from the electro-optic medium and the writing means may comprise separating means for separating the protective layer from the electro-optic medium before the electro-optic medium is written by the writing means, the separating means permitting the protective layer to overlie the electro-optic medium after the electro-optic medium has been written by the writing means.

To enable a user to consult multiple drawings at the same time, the tube apparatus may comprise at least two discrete drawing sheets, each of the drawings sheets having an associated writing means so that different drawings can be displayed on each discrete drawing sheet. Such an apparatus may have a rotatable spindle provided within its housing, all the drawing sheets, when in their closed positions, being wound around this spindle. Alternatively, the apparatus may have a plurality of rotatable spindles disposed within the housing, one spindle being associated with each drawing sheet, each drawing sheet, when in its closed position, being wound around its associated spindle.

In the table apparatus of the invention having a display member and means for supporting this member above a horizontal floor, the display member may have the form of a hollow box, the electro-optic medium being disposed on an internal surface of this box, and the portion of this box adjacent the electro-optic medium being substantially transparent so as to enable an observer to see the electro-optic medium through the viewing surface, and the writing head may comprise an elongate member arranged to move within the box so as to write on the electro-optic medium. Alternatively, in such box-like table apparatus, the writing head may comprise a stylus member and the drive means may be arranged to move the writing head in two dimensions over the electro-optic medium. In another

embodiment of the table apparatus in which the display member has the form of a hollow box, the writing head may be disposed at a fixed location within the box, and the drive means may be arranged to drive the movable member past this fixed writing head.

5 Like the tube apparatus previously described, the table apparatus of the present invention may comprise data storage means for storing data representing a plurality of drawings, and data selection means for selecting at least one of this plurality of drawings for writing by the writing head on the electro-optic medium. The table apparatus may also comprise manually-operable data input means
10 arranged so that data input to this data input means can modify a drawing displayed on the electro-optic medium. Data storage means may be operatively associated with the data input means and arranged to store modifications to drawings displayed on the apparatus and modified by data input to the data input means. The data input means may comprise one or more of a keyboard, a mouse, a joystick and a touch
15 screen. In a preferred form of the table apparatus, the data input means comprises a touch screen disposed on the opposed side of the electro-optic medium from the viewing surface, the electro-optic medium being deformable such that pressure applied to the viewing surface is transmitted to the touch screen. In such an apparatus, the electro-optic medium is desirably substantially non-transmissive of
20 visible light.

 In both the tube and table apparatus of the present invention, the electro-optic medium may be of any of the types previously described, for example an electrochromic medium, a rotating bichromal member medium or an electrophoretic medium, especially an encapsulated electrophoretic medium.

25 As already mentioned, the present invention also provides a display comprising an optic medium having a viewing surface, and a touch screen disposed on the opposed side of the optic medium from the viewing surface. This type of display preferably uses an optic medium substantially non-transmissive of visible light. Either an air gap or a spacer layer may be provided between the optic medium
30 and the touch screen. The optic medium may comprise a plurality of light emitting

diodes or an electro-optic medium, for example, an electro-chromic medium, a rotating bichromal member medium or an electrophoretic medium, especially an encapsulated electrophoretic medium.

As will readily be apparent to those skilled in the art of constructing displays, in such a display not only the optic medium itself but also electrodes and another other circuitry present adjacent the medium must withstand the deformation necessary to permit transmission of pressure from the viewing surface through the medium to the touch screen. Any of the known types of electrodes and associated circuitry may be used in the displays of the present invention. For example, the display may be of the "direct drive" type, in which one electrode is divided into a plurality of pixels and a discrete conductor and switching device are provided for each pixel; see for example the aforementioned WO 00/05704. Alternatively, the display may be of either the passive matrix or active matrix type, although it should be noted that certain types of optic media, because they lack a threshold, are not readily driven by a passive matrix technique. In an active matrix display a plurality of select lines and a plurality of data lines are provided, such that each pixel is defined uniquely by an intersection of a specific select line with a specific data line. Each pixel has a transistor, typically a thin film transistor, associated with it. One of the source and drain electrodes of the transistor is connected to a pixel electrode, which extends across the whole area of the pixel and applies an electric field to the optic medium (typically, in such an active matrix display, a single continuous electrode is used on the opposed side of the medium from the transistors). The other of the source and drain electrodes of the transistor is connected to a data line, while the gate of the transistor is connected to a select line (the data and select line connections could of course be reversed). See for example the aforementioned WO 00/67327. The use of organic semiconductors and/or organic conductive polymers may be useful in forming conductors and transistors with the necessary flexibility to withstand repeated deformations in the displays of the present invention.

In the process of the present invention, the layer of electro-optic material may be a discrete entity (i.e., a discrete sheet of electro-optic material), or

the layer may be disposed on one internal surface of the envelope, though the latter is generally preferred since it prevents the electro-optic material slipping, and perhaps bending or folding during the writing process. The layer of electro-optic material and the envelope may be substantially rectangular, the spaced retaining members may comprise two parallel elongate members, and the spaced elongate members be inserted into the envelope so as to extend substantially along an opposed pair of edges thereof, so that substantially the whole of the layer of electro-optic material is available for writing by the writing head. Conveniently, the spacing between the spaced containing members can be varied, so that the spaced retaining members can be inserted within the envelope and the spacing between the spaced retaining members thereafter increased, thereby placing the envelope under tension before the writing head writes the image. The writing head may be arranged to commence writing the image at a portion of the electro-optic medium remote from the flap and to write successive portions of the image closer to the flap. As in the tube and table apparatus previously described, the electro-optic medium may be an electro-chromic medium, a rotating bichromal member medium or an electrophoretic medium, especially an encapsulated electrophoretic medium.

A first preferred tube apparatus of the present invention, this tube apparatus being designed to resemble the cylinders conventionally used to transport and protect construction drawings, is illustrated in schematic cross-section in Figure 1 of the accompanying drawings. The apparatus (generally designated 10) comprises a substantially cylindrical housing 12, closed at both ends but with an elongate slot 14 running almost the full length of the housing 12 parallel to the axis thereof. A rotatable spindle 16 extends along the axis of the cylindrical housing 12, and a sheet 18 of electrophoretic medium is wound around the spindle 16. The sheet 18 is provided along one edge with a grip bar 20 which a user grips in order to pull the sheet 18 out of the housing 12, in the process unrolling the sheet 18 from around the spindle 16. The grip bar 20 is shaped so that when the sheet 18 is fully retracted within the housing 12, the grip bar 20 closes the slot 14, thus preventing dust or debris entering the housing 12. Thus, the sheet 18 can be moved manually between

a closed position, in which most of the sheet 18 is wound around the spindle 16 and only a small part of the sheet 18 extends from the spindle 16 to the grip bar 20 adjacent the slot 14 (so that the whole of the sheet 18 lies within the housing 12), and an open position, in which the major part of the sheet 20 lies outside the housing 12; Figure 1 illustrates the tube apparatus 10 as the sheet 18 is being moved from its closed to its open position.

As already indicated, the sheet 18 is intended to be pulled manually out of the housing 12. Obviously, it is necessary to provide a mechanism for retraction of the sheet 18 back into the housing 12, and this retraction mechanism may be of any convenient type. The retraction mechanism could be mechanical; for example, the spindle 16 could be provided with torsion springs which tighten as the sheet 18 is pulled from the housing 12, with a latching mechanism being provided to prevent premature retraction of the sheet 18 by the springs. Alternatively, the retraction mechanism could be power-operated; for example, a small electric motor could be provided to rotate the spindle 16 in order to retract the sheet 18. Obviously, if a power-operated retraction mechanism is provided, the same mechanism could also operate to drive the sheet 18 out of the housing 12.

Adjacent the slot 14 within the housing 12, there is provided a linear writing head 22 which writes an image on to the sheet 18 as the sheet is being pulled out of the housing 12. The writing head 22 may be of any of the types used for writing on electro-optic media, and thus may be, for example, in the form of a row of electrodes which contact the upper surface (in Figure 1) of the sheet 18, or in the form of a row of wires or corotrons which place electrostatic charge on the upper surface of the sheet 18 without physically contacting the sheet, although in general the latter is preferred. Whether the writing head 22 is of a contact or non-contact type, it is desirable that the writing head 22 and the sheet 18 be selected so that they operate together in the so-called "electrostatic" mode, in which the writing head 22 places upon the adjacent surface of the sheet 18 an electrostatic charge which persists upon this surface for an extended period of time. Operating in this electrostatic mode enables the sheet 18 to be imaged more quickly (since each

individual pixel of the image does not need to be in contact with the head 22 for the entire period necessary for the pixel to switch completely between its two optical states—each individual pixel can be in contact with the head 22 for a substantially shorter period, with the residual electrostatic charge left on the pixel sufficing to
5 complete the switching process after the pixel has passed the head), and the persistence of the electrostatic charge on the medium increases the period for which the image remains stable.

A spring-biased roller 24 (a spring-biased bar could also be used) is provided adjacent the writing head 22 to bias the sheet 18 into proper contact with
10 the writing head. At least the outer surface of the roller 24 is desirably electrically conductive so that the roller 24 can act as a counter electrode for the writing head 22. Alternatively, a conductive layer could be provided on the lower surface (in Figure 1) of the sheet 18 to act as such a counter electrode; for example, the sheet 18 could be formed from an aluminized polyester film, a material which is readily
15 available commercially. In order to allow for variations in the speed with which the sheet 18 is manually withdrawn from the housing 12, at least a portion of the roller 24 is desirably provided with markings which can be detected by a photodetector (not shown) as the roller 24 rotates as the sheet 18 is withdrawn, the signals from the photodetector being used, in a known manner, to control the operation of the writing
20 head 22.

As will readily be apparent to those skilled in the technology of electrophoretic and similar displays, the apparatus 10 should be provided with control circuitry for controlling the operation of the writing head 22, a battery for powering the control circuitry and the writing head, a data storage device capable of
25 storing multiple images, and a selection device (for example, a rotary switch, conveniently provided on one end of the cylindrical housing 12) for selecting which of the stored images is to be printed on the sheet 18. The apparatus 10 is also desirably provided with a connector for interfacing with an external data storage and/or display device. For example, the apparatus 10 could be provided with a USB
30 port to enable it to communicate with a computer, thus allowing for downloading of

images from a computer to the apparatus 10 and/or previewing on the computer of images stored in the apparatus 10. Alternatively or in addition, the apparatus 10 could be provided with a modem (desirably a wireless modem) to enable it to communicate with a central computer server on which a large number of images
5 could be stored, thus enabling a user on site to receive any desired image from a company's collection.

The apparatus 10 can readily be constructed so that the sheet 18 can be replaced if it becomes excessively dirty or damaged in use. This is a substantial advantage, since electrophoretic media can be manufactured comparatively
10 inexpensively, so that the sheet 18 could be replaced at a cost much lower than that of replacing the entire apparatus 10.

To reduce the need for replacement of the sheet of medium, the sheet may be provided with a protective cover, and a tube apparatus of this type (generally designated 10') is illustrated in Figure 2. The apparatus shown in Figure 2 closely
15 resembles that shown in Figure 1 but uses a transparent protective sheet 30 that overlies and protects the sheet 18. Like the sheet 18, the protective sheet 30 is wound around the spindle 16 and has one edge attached to the grip bar 20. However, since it may be difficult or impossible to write on the sheet 18 with the protective sheet 30 overlying the sheet 18, the protective sheet 30 does not pass
20 through the slot 14, but instead passes through an auxiliary slot 32 which is parallel to, but spaced from, the slot 14. Rollers 34 are provided to guide the protective sheet 30 through the slot 32.

The use of the protective sheet 30 may also be advantageous in reducing the tendency for images, written on electro-optic media using the electrostatic mode described above, to smear when users rub or slide their hands
25 across the images. Although the exact mechanism of this smearing is not at present well understood, it is related to the removal by the users of the residual electrostatic charge remaining on the medium. Placing a protective sheet 30 over the imaged medium avoids direct contact between the user and the medium, thus essentially
30 preventing removal of the residual electrostatic charge and the resultant smearing.

The tube apparatus shown in Figures 1 and 2 write upon only a single sheet of medium at one time. In practice, users often need to refer to multiple construction drawings or blueprints at the same time, and given the size of the individual drawings or blueprints, this is normally done by stacking the drawings or blueprints on top of one another. The apparatus shown in Figures 1 and 2 can readily be modified to write on such a stack of sheets 18 by winding a plurality of such sheets around a single spindle but providing a separate printing head and associated roller for each sheet; in view of space constraints, in such an apparatus it may be convenient to provide the printing heads and associated rollers outside the cylindrical housing 12 and to protect these heads and rollers with an appropriate protective cover. Alternatively, the separate sheets 18 could be wound around individual parallel spindles within a single housing of larger diameter and/or non-circular cross-section; it will be appreciated that although the apparatus 10 and 10' is for convenience called a "tube apparatus" the housing 12 need not be cylindrical and could have any convenient form, for example a square or hexagonal prism, or a modified cylinder with one flat surface; such a modified cylinder might be used to reduce the tendency for a cylindrical housing to roll across a table on which it is placed.

Figure 3 illustrates in cross-section part of a preferred table apparatus of the present invention. The table apparatus (generally designated 50) shown in Figure 3 is intended for use in a construction trailer or similar environment where it functions as a table, desk or similar article of furniture. The apparatus 50 comprises a horizontally disposed display member (module) or table top (generally designated 52) supported on legs 54, only one of which is visible in Figure 3; these legs 54 preferably fold flat against the table top 52 for ease of transportation.

The table top 52 essentially has the form of a shallow closed box and comprises a transparent viewing member 56, which forms the upper face of the box and through which a user views the images provided by the apparatus 50. On the lower surface of the member 56 are coated a transparent electrode layer 58 and an electrophoretic medium layer 60 (other types of electro-optic medium could of

course be used). A writing head 62, generally similar to the writing head 22 shown in Figure 1, lies adjacent the exposed lower surface of the electrophoretic medium layer 60, and can be driven linearly in both directions relative to the layer 60 by a conventional drive mechanism (not shown). For example, the end portions of the writing head 62 could be provided with threaded apertures engaged with rotatable threaded drive rods in a manner well known to mechanical engineers.

The apparatus 50 may be provided with control circuitry for controlling the operation of the writing head 62, a battery for powering the control circuitry and the writing head, a data storage device capable of storing multiple images, and a selection device for selecting which of the stored images is to be printed on the layer 60, as described above with reference to Figure 1. Also, the apparatus 50 is also desirably provided with a connector for interfacing with an external data storage and/or display device. Note, however, that the larger size of the apparatus shown in Figure 3, as compared with those shown in Figures 1 and 2, renders it easier to incorporate conventional computer components into the apparatus of Figure 3. For example, the apparatus shown in Figure 3 could incorporate one or more conventional hard disks for storage of a large number of drawings. The apparatus could also be provided with data input means more elaborate than a simple selector for stored drawings. The data input means could comprise any one or more of a keyboard, a mouse, a joystick and a touch screen. A keypad or keyboard and/or a small preview screen might be provided to facilitate review of stored drawings; these components could conveniently be built into the viewing member 56. Finally, the apparatus of Figure 3 could also be modified to incorporate a printer, preferably a thermal or ink jet printer, to provide hard copies of stored drawings when such copies are deemed essential.

Although the "table" type of apparatus shown in Figure 3 does not permit stacking of drawings, it can readily be made large enough to display several sheets of construction drawings or blueprints at the same time.

The apparatus shown in Figure 3 may be modified in several ways. For example, it is not essential that the electrophoretic medium layer 60 be coated on

the underside of the viewing member 56. Instead, the electrophoretic medium layer could be provided on the surface of an endless loop or belt wrapped around two rollers disposed below the viewing member 56. A static writing head could be used to image the loop of electrophoretic medium; this writing head is preferably
5 disposed inside the loop on the lower half of the loop so that the writing operation is not immediately visible to the user.

Alternatively, the electrophoretic medium layer coated on the viewing member 56 could be retained, and the writing head 62 replaced with a writing stylus, which could be driven in two dimensions in known manner. This type of apparatus
10 might be especially useful for viewing images produced by computer-assisted design (CAD) software. Such software is often designed for use with pen plotters, and could readily be modified to control the operation of a stylus. (Some modification of software drivers used with pen plotters may be required, since such plotters normally write on the "front" surface of an output sheet, that is the surface intended
15 to be viewed, whereas in the type of apparatus shown in Figure 3, the stylus would write on the "rear" surface of the electrophoretic medium, thus requiring left-right reversal of the image written. However, the necessary modifications of driver software are well within the skill of programmers accustomed to writing such drivers.)

20 A touch screen extending over part or all of the upper surface of the viewing member 56, or the other types of data input means previously discussed could also be used to allow for modification of drawings displayed on the table apparatus, and thus enable modification of drawings on site. As is well known to those engaged in the construction industry, in any project of substantial size there are
25 inevitably numerous changes between the original plans and the final structure as built, and these numerous changes must be incorporated into the plans in order that the eventual owners of the building can be provided with accurate plans of the building as actually constructed. Tracking these numerous changes is often an administrative nightmare, and it is not unknown for changes to be lost between the
30 construction site and the persons preparing the "as built" plans. An apparatus of

present invention as shown in Figure 3 with appropriate data input means and drawing software could be used to enable direct manipulation of drawings on site and re-transmission of the amended drawings back to a central database. Such an apparatus could also be used by engineers discussing possible ways of modifying existing plans to take account of difficulties experienced on site.

Although in the apparatus shown in Figure 3, because of the rigid nature of the viewing member 56 and the placement of the writing head 62 behind this viewing member (from the perspective of the user), a touch screen would normally be placed on the upper surface of the viewing member 56, and thus between the user and the electrophoretic medium layer 60, this is not essential. Various electro-optic media, for example microencapsulated electrophoretic and bichromal rotating member media can withstand considerable pressure without damage, so that it is practicable to place a touch screen behind the medium, i.e., with the medium between the user and the touch screen. Indeed, since both microencapsulated electrophoretic and bichromal rotating member media normally operate in a reflective mode, and any touch screen construction placed between such a medium and a user necessarily absorbs some light and thus reduces the apparent brightness of the medium, it is generally preferred to place the touch screen behind the medium where the construction of the overall apparatus permits this. For example, if it is desired to incorporate a touch screen into the apparatus of the invention shown in Figure 1 or 2, such a touch screen would preferably be placed on the back face of the sheet 18 (i.e., on the lower face as seen in Figure 1 or 2).

Alternatively or in addition, the upper surface of the viewing member 56 shown in Figure 3 could be treated to render it suitable for writing with an erasable marker or similar writing instrument capable of writing erasable markings. Again, the provision of such a writing surface, which would enable users to superimpose temporary markings over a drawing, could be used by engineers discussing possible ways of modifying existing drawings or plans.

The usefulness of placing a touch screen "behind" an optic medium (i.e., on the opposed side of the medium from the observer/user of the display) is

not, however, confined to a table apparatus and, as already mentioned, this invention provides a display comprising an optic medium having a viewing surface through which an observer can view the optic medium and on which the observer can press, this optic medium being changeable between first and second display states differing
5 in at least one optical property on application of a stimulus thereto, the display further comprising a touch screen disposed on the opposed side of the optic medium from the viewing surface, the optic medium being deformable such that pressure applied to the viewing surface is transmitted to the touch screen. Most conventional displays using touch screens superposed on the display employ liquid crystals as the
10 display medium. In such displays, it is in practice necessary to place the touch screen in front of the liquid crystal display medium, since liquid crystal displays typically need rigid glass supports which would not transmit finger pressure on the exposed surface of the display through the liquid crystal medium to a touch screen placed behind the liquid crystal medium. Furthermore, since conventional liquid
15 crystal displays are viewed in transmission, light from a back lighting source placed behind the display medium and the touch screen will be subject to the same absorption regardless of which way round the display medium and the touch screen are placed, i.e., the light necessarily passes through both the display medium and the touch screen. Obviously, when a cathode ray tube is used as the display medium,
20 the touch screen must be placed in front of the cathode ray tube. Accordingly, it is conventional practice to place touch screens in front of their associated display media.

However, conventional touch screens are only about 68 per cent transmissive, so employing a touch screen substantially diminishes the brightness of
25 the display, and, at least partly for this reason, users frequently have difficulty using such displays (for example, automatic teller machines) in outdoor locations in bright daylight.

As already mentioned, various types of display media, such as encapsulated electrophoretic media and rotating bichromal member media, are
30 capable of sustaining considerable pressure without damage, and such media can

also be made sufficiently deformable to transmit pressure therethrough. With such media, the touch screen can be placed behind the display medium and still receive pressure applied by a user to the exposed face of the medium. Furthermore, most such media are substantially opaque (non-transmissive of visible light), and with such media a substantial increase in brightness of the display is achieved by placing the touch screen behind the display medium; the medium has the same brightness that it would if no touch screen were present, since the touch screen is invisible behind the opaque display medium, and the loss of brightness which would result from the double passage of the reflected light through a touch screen placed in front of the display medium is avoided. Also, the pressure applied to the display will, in most cases, not produce any change in the appearance of the display.

The touch screens used in the present displays may be of any conventional type. As is well-known to those skilled in the relevant art, the touch sensing means of a touch screen typically comprises two continuous orthogonal electrodes on two separate transparent substrates, these continuous electrodes acting as an analog voltage divider. Alternatively, such a touch sensing means may comprise two arrays of transparent electrodes on separate transparent substrates, for example, a series of parallel row electrodes on one substrate and a series of parallel column electrodes on the other, or a matrix array of electrodes on one substrate and a single continuous electrode on the other. In all cases, the two electrodes or arrays of electrodes lie parallel to one another but are spaced a short distance apart by mechanical spacers, a liquid film or pressurized gas. At least the front substrate (that adjacent the user) is made flexible so that application of modest pressure, as from a user's finger on the front substrate, will cause contact between the electrodes (or between at least one electrode in each array), thus enabling associated electronics to generate a signal indicating where on the sensing means the pressure was applied.

Although a touch screen itself typically requires two electrodes and an electro-optic display also requires two electrodes, in some cases (depending upon the type of touch screen used) it may be possible to reduce the complexity and expense of a touch screen with an electro-optic display by using only three

electrodes. If one electrode of the touch screen is fabricated upon a very thin substrate, it may be possible to use this electrode as both the front electrode of the touch screen and the rear electrode of the display; such a dual-function electrode may conveniently be of the continuous electrode type (i.e., in the form of a single electrode extending across the entire area of the touch screen display). Alternatively a single substrate, preferably a flexible plastic film, could be coated on both sides with a continuous layer of conductive material so that this coated substrate serves as both the front electrode of the touch screen and the rear electrode of the display.

In the present displays, an air gap may be provided between the display medium and the touch screen; the provision of such an air gap may be useful in preventing spurious outputs from the touch screen, for example, inputs caused by wind pressure on a display installed in an outdoor location. Alternatively, a spacer layer may be provided between the medium and the touch screen, this spacer layer transmitting pressure from the medium to the touch screen when pressure is applied to the medium.

Figure 4 of the accompanying drawings is a schematic section through a display (generally designated 70) of the present invention. This display 70 comprises a protective layer 72, conveniently formed from a plastic film, the exposed surface of this protective layer 72 forming a viewing surface accessible to a user. The display 70 further comprises an encapsulated electrophoretic display medium 74 (the electrodes of both the display medium 74 and the touch screen described below are omitted from Figure 4 for ease of illustration) in contact with the protective layer 72 and a touch screen 76 on the opposed side of the medium 74 from the viewing surface. Finally, the display 70 comprises a rigid casing 78.

As illustrated in Figure 4, when pressure is applied to the protective layer 72 by a stylus 80 (finger pressure could alternatively be used) both the protective layer 72 and the display medium 74 deform, so that the touch screen 76 is compressed between the display medium 74 and the rigid casing 78 at the point where pressure is applied and a signal indicating the position where the pressure is applied is generated.

Figure 5 illustrates an apparatus (generally designated 100) for carrying out the method of the present invention and imaging a medium which can be handled as a loose sheet but which avoids exposing the imageable layer directly to the environment. The apparatus 100 images a medium (generally designated 102; the medium is shown in broken lines in Figure 5 to illustrate more clearly the apparatus 100) having essentially the form of a re-sealable envelope and comprising two rectangular sheets (preferably formed of a polymeric film or similar tough material) sealed to each other along three of their edges, one of the sheets 104 bearing along its fourth edge a flap 106 provided with a re-sealable pressure sensitive adhesive, so that this flap 106 can be removed from, and replaced back on, one surface of the other sheet in the same manner as in a conventional envelope. The sheet 104 is transparent and bears on its *inner* surface an imageable layer (not shown).

The apparatus 100 comprises a control unit 110 from which extend two pairs of parallel rods 112, 114, 116 and 118. The outer pair of rods 112 and 118 support the medium 102 during printing; as shown in Figure 5, the user opens the flap 106 and slides the open end of the medium 102 over the rods 112 and 118. As indicated by the double-headed arrow in Figure 5, the rod 118 can be moved laterally by the user so that the medium 102 can easily be slid over the rods 112 and 118, but so that once the rod 118 has been moved back to its outer position the rods 112 and 118 hold the sheets under tension, so that the sheet 104 will remain flat during the printing operation described below. A manually-operable latching mechanism (not shown) is provided to enable the rod 118 to be locked in its outer position.

The inner pair of rods 114 and 116 carry a writing head 120 which can be moved linearly in both directions along the rods 114 and 116. As the writing head 120 traverses the rods 114 and 116, it writes an image on the imageable layer on the inner surface of the sheet 104 under the control of circuitry (not shown) provided within the control unit 110.

Once the medium 102 has been manually placed upon and tensioned by the rods 112 and 118 as previously described, the user presses a switch (not shown) on the control unit 110 to indicate that the medium 102 is ready for imaging. The control unit 110 then causes the writing head 120 to traverse the rods 114 and 116 and to write an image on the imageable layer. To avoid any possibility of damage to the apparatus 100 by an impetuous user, it is preferred that the writing head 120 first move rapidly to its outer position (remote from the control unit 110) and write the image as it moves back towards the control unit; thus, if the user attempts to remove the medium 102 from the rods 112 and 118 before the writing head 120 has completely returned to its inner position, there is little risk of damage to the writing head since the writing head will already be essentially clear of the medium 102. Once the writing operation is complete, the user moves the rod 118 inwardly, removes the medium 102 from the apparatus 100 and re-seals the flap 106 against the other sheet, so keeping the imageable layer within a sealed envelope during use of the imaged medium 102.

As will readily be apparent to those skilled in the imaging art, numerous changes and modifications can be made in the preferred embodiments of the present invention already described without departing from the spirit and skill of the invention. For example, the apparatus of the invention shown in Figures 1 and 2 could make use of the touch screen and writable surface described above with reference to Figure 3; in the case of the apparatus shown in Figure 2, the touch screen and/or writable surface could be provided on the protective sheet 30. In Figure 4, the electrophoretic medium 74 could be replaced by a plurality of light emitting diodes, or an electrochromic or rotating bichromal member medium. In general, the preferred type of electro-optic medium for use in the apparatus, displays and process of the present invention is an encapsulated electrophoretic medium, and the reader is referred to the aforementioned MIT and E Ink patents and applications for further details of the preferred forms of this type of medium. Accordingly, the foregoing description is to be construed in an illustrative and not in a limitative sense.

H-318PCT

CLAIMS

- 1 1. An apparatus (10, 10') for displaying a drawing, the apparatus
2 comprising:
3 an electro-optic medium having first and second display states
4 differing in at least one optical property, the medium being changed from its first to
5 its second display state by application of an electric field to said medium; and
6 writing means (22) for writing on the electro-optic medium,
7 the apparatus being characterized by:
8 a housing (12) having an aperture (14) therein;
9 a drawing sheet (18) movable through the aperture (14) between a
10 closed position, in which substantially the whole of the drawing sheet (18) lies
11 within the housing (12), and an open position, in which at least a portion of the
12 drawing sheet (18) lies outside the housing, at least a portion of the drawing sheet
13 (18) carrying the electro-optic medium,
14 the writing means (22) being arranged to write on the drawing sheet
15 (18) as the drawing sheet (18) is moved from its closed to its open position, thereby
16 producing a drawing on the electro-optic medium.
- 1 2. An apparatus according to claim 1 characterized by a rotatable
2 spindle (16) disposed within the housing (12), the drawing sheet (18), when in its
3 closed position, being wound around the spindle (16), the drawing sheet (18) being
4 moved from its closed to its open position by being unwound from the spindle (16).
- 1 3. An apparatus according to claim 2 characterized in that the
2 housing (12) is substantially cylindrical, the spindle (16) has an axis of rotation
3 substantially parallel to the axis of the housing (12) and the aperture (14) has the
4 form of an elongate slot extending substantially parallel to the axis of the housing
5 (12).
- 1 4. An apparatus according to any one of the preceding claims
2 characterized by retraction means arranged to retract the drawing sheet (18) from its
3 open to its closed position, and latching means having a latched position, in which
4 the latching means prevent the retracting means retracting the drawing sheet (18)

5 from its open to its closed position, and an unlatched position, in which the latching
6 means permits the retracting means to retract the drawing sheet (18) from its open to
7 its closed position.

1 5. An apparatus according to any one of the preceding claims
2 characterized in that the writing means (22) places upon the electro-optic medium an
3 electrostatic charge which persists after the electro-optic medium has passed the
4 writing means (22).

1 6. An apparatus according to any one of the preceding claims
2 characterized in that the writing means (22) comprises a conductive member (24)
3 provided with biasing means arranged to bias the conductive member (24) into
4 contact with the drawing sheet (18) as the writing means (22) is writing on the
5 drawing sheet (18), so that the conductive member (24) forms one electrode of the
6 writing means (22).

1 7. An apparatus according to any one of the preceding claims
2 characterized in that at least the portion of the drawing sheet (18) bearing the
3 electro-optic medium comprises a conductive layer.

1 8. An apparatus according to any one of the preceding claims
2 characterized by a closure member (20) secured to the drawing sheet (18) in a
3 position such that, when the drawing sheet (18) is in its closed position, the closure
4 member (20) substantially closes the aperture (14).

1 9. An apparatus according to any one of the preceding claims
2 characterized in that the drawing sheet (18) comprises a protective layer (30)
3 covering the electro-optic medium.

1 10. An apparatus according to claim 9 characterized in that the
2 protective layer (30) is separable from the electro-optic medium and the writing
3 means (22) comprises separating means (34) for separating the protective layer (30)
4 from the electro-optic medium before the electro-optic medium is written by the
5 writing means (22), the separating means (34) permitting the protective layer (30) to
6 overlie the electro-optic medium after the electro-optic medium has been written by
7 the writing means (22).

1 11. An apparatus according to any one of the preceding claims
2 characterized by at least two discrete drawing sheets, each of the drawing sheets
3 having an associated writing means so that different drawings can be displayed on
4 each discrete drawing sheet.

1 12. An apparatus according to any one of the preceding claims
2 characterized in that the electro-optic medium comprises an electrochromic medium,
3 a rotating bichromal member medium, or an electrophoretic medium.

1 13. An apparatus according to claim 12 characterized in that the
2 electrophoretic medium is an encapsulated electrophoretic medium.

1 14. An apparatus (50) for displaying a drawing, the apparatus (50)
2 comprising:

3 a display member (52) having a viewing surface;
4 an electro-optic medium (60) having first and second display states
5 differing in at least one optical property, the medium (60) being changed from its
6 first to its second display state by application of an electric field to the medium, the
7 electro-optic medium (60) being disposed on the display member (52) so as to be
8 visible to an observer viewing the viewing surface; and

9 a writing head (62) arranged to write on the electro-optic medium
10 (60)

11 the apparatus (50) being characterized by:

12 support means (54) for supporting the display member (52) above a
13 horizontal floor with the viewing surface facing upwardly; and

14 drive means for moving the writing head (62) relative to the electro-
15 optic medium (60).

1 15. An apparatus according to claim 14 characterized in that the
2 display member (52) has the form of a hollow box, the electro-optic medium (60) is
3 disposed on an internal surface of the box, the portion (56) of the box adjacent the
4 electro-optic medium (60) being substantially transparent so as to enable an observer
5 to see the electro-optic medium (60) through the viewing surface, and the writing

6 head (62) comprises an elongate member arranged to move within the box so as to
7 write on the electro-optic medium (60).

1 16. An apparatus according to claim 14 characterized in that the
2 display member has the form of a hollow box, the electro-optic medium is disposed
3 on an internal surface of the box, the portion of the box adjacent the electro-optic
4 medium being substantially transparent so as to enable an observer to see the
5 electro-optic medium through the viewing surface, the writing head comprises a
6 stylus member, and the drive means are arranged to move the writing head in two
7 dimensions over the electro-optic medium.

1 17. An apparatus according to claim 14 characterized in that the
2 display member has the form of a hollow box, the electro-optic medium is disposed
3 on a movable member within the box, the writing head is disposed at a fixed
4 location within the box, and the drive means is arranged to drive the movable
5 member past the fixed writing head

1 18. An apparatus according to any one of claims 14 to 17
2 characterized by manually-operable data input means arranged so that data input to
3 the data input means can modify a drawing displayed on the electro-optic medium
4 (60).

1 19. An apparatus according to claim 18 characterized by data
2 storage means operatively associated with the data input means and arranged to store
3 modifications to drawings displayed on the apparatus (50) and modified by data
4 input to the data input means.

1 20. An apparatus according to claim 18 or 19 characterized in that
2 the data input means comprises a touch screen disposed on the opposed side of the
3 electro-optic medium (60) from the viewing surface, the electro-optic medium (60)
4 being deformable such that pressure applied to the viewing surface is transmitted to
5 the touch screen.

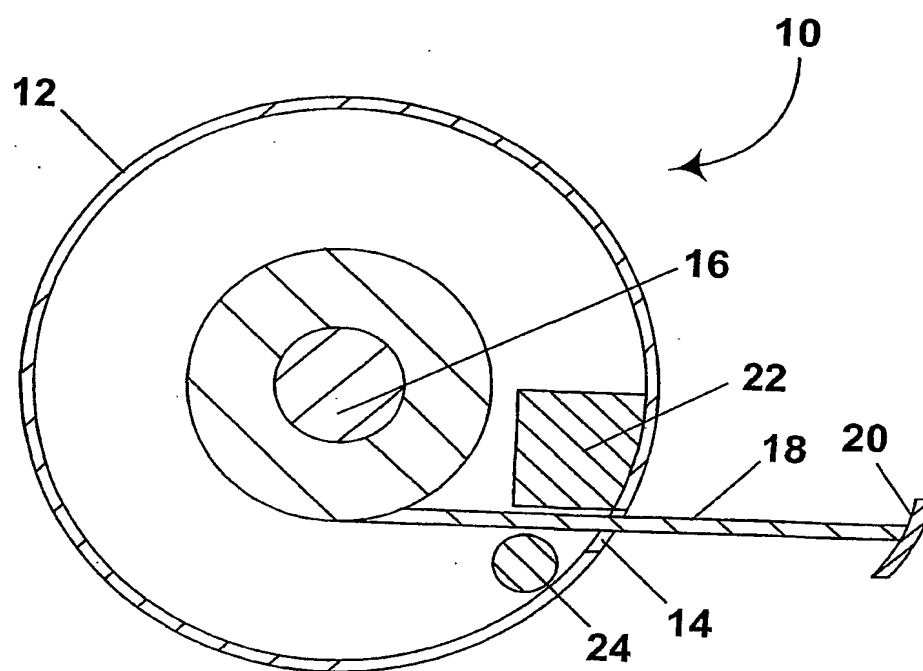
1 21. A display (70) comprising a touch screen (76) and an optic
2 medium (74) having a viewing surface through which an observer can view the optic
3 medium (74), the optic medium (74) being changeable between first and second

4 display states differing in at least one optical property on application of a stimulus
5 thereto, the display (70) being characterized in that the optic medium (74) is arranged
6 so that the observer can press thereon, and the touch screen (76) is disposed on the
7 opposed side of the optic medium (74) from the viewing surface, the optic medium
8 (74) being deformable such that pressure applied to the viewing surface is
9 transmitted to the touch screen (76).

1 22. A display according to claim 21 characterized in that the optic
2 medium (74) is substantially non-transmissive of visible light.

1 23. A process for writing on a protected sheet of electro-optic
2 material, the protected sheet comprising a sheet of electro-optic material and a
3 protective envelope substantially completely surrounding the sheet of electro-optic
4 material, the envelope having an openable and recloseable flap which can be opened
5 to permit access to the sheet of electro-optic material, the process using a writing
6 apparatus comprising at least two spaced retaining members and a writing head
7 which can be moved between the spaced retaining members, the process comprising:
8 opening the flap of the envelope;
9 inserting the spaced retaining members within the envelope, thereby
10 creating a gap between the sheet of electro-optic material and one surface of the
11 envelope;
12 moving the writing head between the spaced retaining members and
13 thereby writing an image on the sheet of electro-optic material;
14 withdrawing the spaced retaining members from the envelope; and
15 reclosing the flap of the envelope.

1/5

**Fig. 1**

2/5

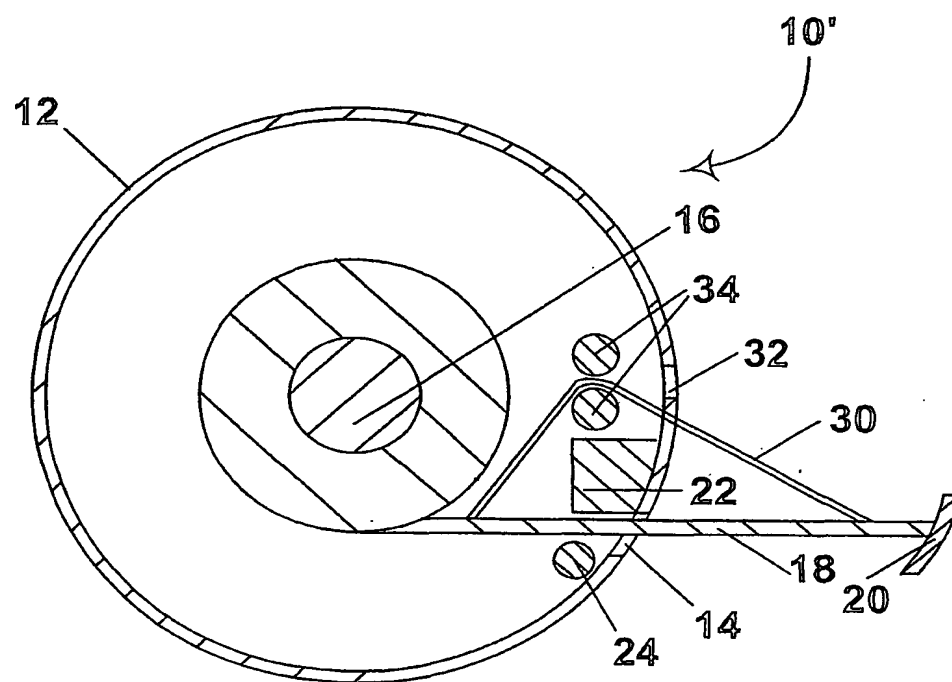


Fig. 2

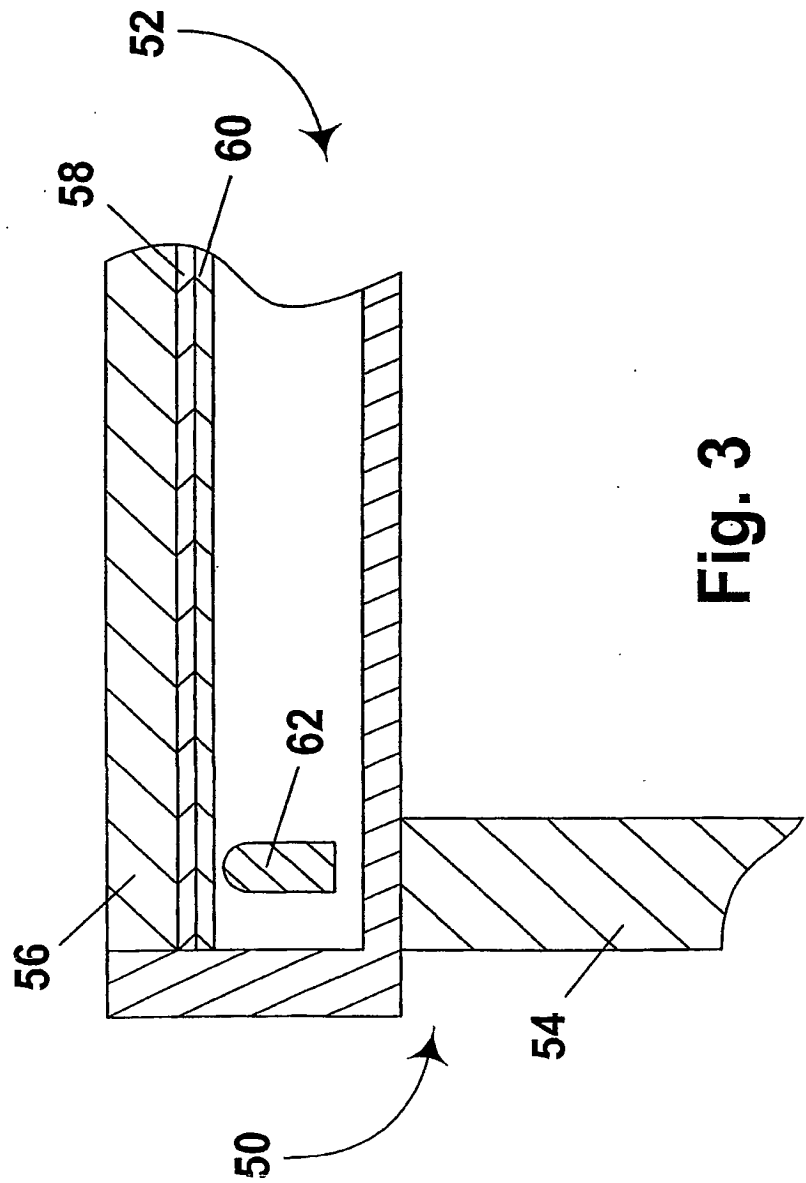


Fig. 3

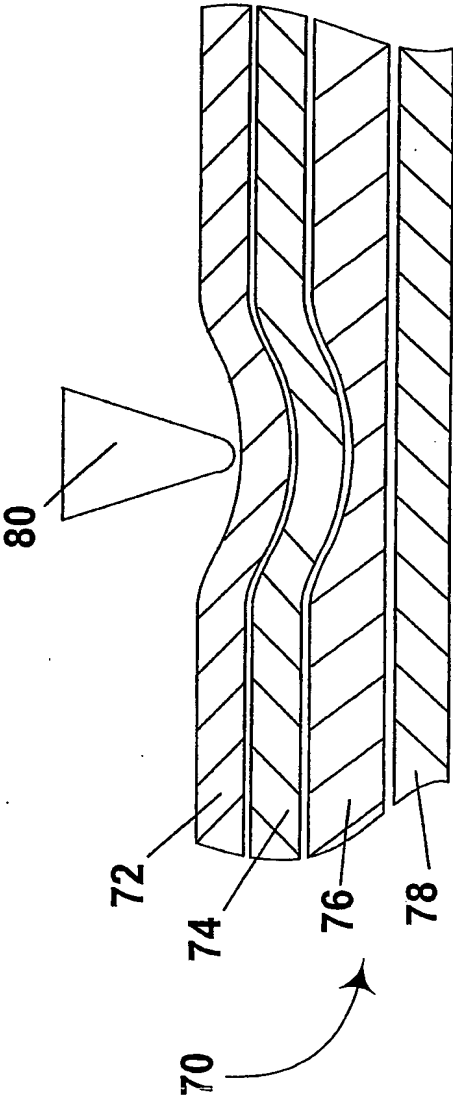


Fig. 4

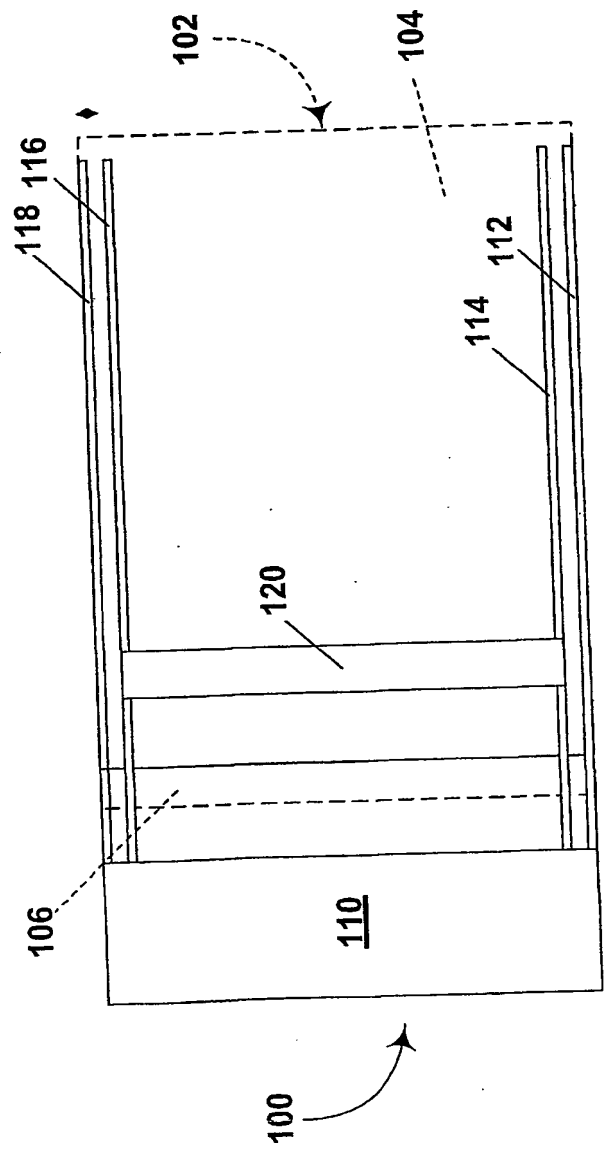


Fig. 5

(19) World Intellectual Property Organization
International Bureau



(43) International Publication Date
19 September 2002 (19.09.2002)

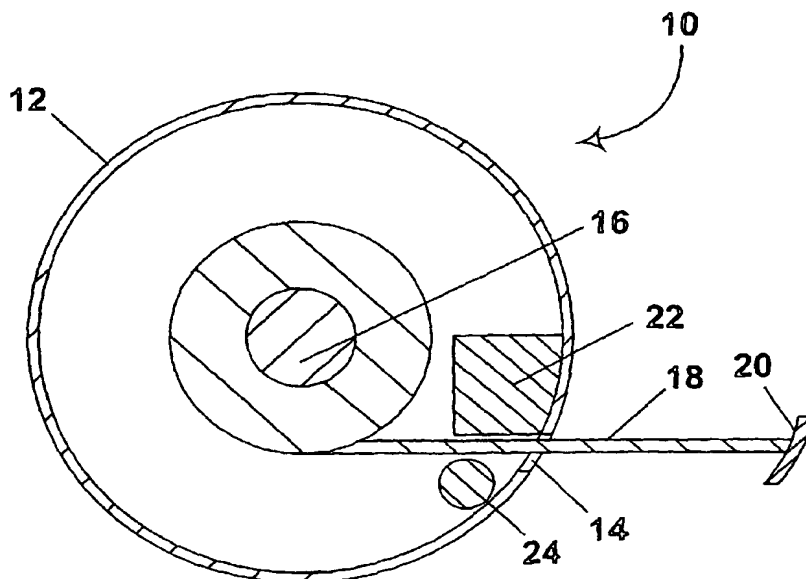
PCT

(10) International Publication Number
WO 02/073572 A3

- (51) International Patent Classification⁷: G09F 9/37, G02F 1/167
- (21) International Application Number: PCT/US02/07545
- (22) International Filing Date: 13 March 2002 (13.03.2002)
- (25) Filing Language: English
- (26) Publication Language: English
- (30) Priority Data:
60/275,291 13 March 2001 (13.03.2001) US
- (71) Applicant: E INK CORPORATION [US/US]; 733 Concord Avenue, Cambridge, MA 02138-1002 (US).
- (72) Inventors: BAUCOM, Allan, Scott; 38 Seaver Road, Townsend, MA 01469 (US). KNAIAN, Ara, N.; 85 Pearl Street, Cambridge, MA 02139 (US). LINDEN, Heather, A.; Apartment No. 711, 10 Magazine Street, Cambridge, MA 02139 (US). O'MALLEY, Timothy, J.; 4 Hillside Avenue, Wakefield, MA 01880 (US). WILCOX, Russell, J.; 17 Winnemay Street, Natick, MA 01760 (US).
- (74) Agent: COLE, David, John; E INK Corporation, 733 Concord Avenue, Cambridge, MA 02138-1002 (US).
- (81) Designated States (*national*): AE, AG, AL, AM, AT, AU, AZ, BA, BB, BG, BR, BY, BZ, CA, CH, CN, CO, CR, CU, CZ, DE, DK, DM, DZ, EC, EE, ES, FI, GB, GD, GE, GH, GM, HR, HU, ID, IL, IN, IS, JP, KE, KG, KP, KR, KZ, LC, LK, LR, LS, LT, LU, LV, MA, MD, MG, MK, MN, MW, MX, MZ, NO, NZ, OM, PH, PL, PT, RO, RU, SD, SE, SG, SI, SK, SL, TJ, TM, TN, TR, TT, TZ, UA, UG, UZ, VN, YU, ZA, ZM, ZW.
- (84) Designated States (*regional*): ARIPO patent (GH, GM, KE, LS, MW, MZ, SD, SL, SZ, TZ, UG, ZM, ZW), Eurasian patent (AM, AZ, BY, KG, KZ, MD, RU, TJ, TM), European patent (AT, BE, CH, CY, DE, DK, ES, FI, FR, GB, GR, IE, IT, LU, MC, NL, PT, SE, TR), OAPI patent (BF, BJ, CF, CG, CI, CM, GA, GN, GQ, GW, ML, MR, NE, SN, TD, TG).
- Published:
— with international search report

[Continued on next page]

(54) Title: APPARATUS FOR DISPLAYING DRAWINGS



(57) Abstract: An apparatus (10) for displaying drawings comprises a housing (12) having an aperture (14), a drawing sheet (18) comprising electro-optic material movable through the aperture (14) between closed and open positions, and a writing device (22) for writing on the sheet (18) as it moved between its closed and open positions. The invention also provides a display comprising an optic medium capable of being changed between two display states, the display having a viewing surface through which an observer can view the medium. A touch screen is disposed on the opposed side of the optic medium from the viewing surface, and the optic medium is deformable such that pressure applied to the viewing surface will be transmitted to the touch screen.



WO 02/073572 A3



(88) Date of publication of the international search report:
20 March 2003

For two-letter codes and other abbreviations, refer to the "Guidance Notes on Codes and Abbreviations" appearing at the beginning of each regular issue of the PCT Gazette.

INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

Inte al Application No
PCT/US 02/07545

A. CLASSIFICATION OF SUBJECT MATTER

IPC 7 G09F9/37 G02F1/167

According to International Patent Classification (IPC) or to both national classification and IPC

B. FIELDS SEARCHED

Minimum documentation searched (classification system followed by classification symbols)

IPC 7 G09F G02F G02B G11B G06F

Documentation searched other than minimum documentation to the extent that such documents are included in the fields searched

Electronic data base consulted during the international search (name of data base and, where practical, search terms used)

WPI Data, PAJ, EPO-Internal

C. DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT

Category *	Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages	Relevant to claim No.
X	PATENT ABSTRACTS OF JAPAN vol. 2000, no. 08, 6 October 2000 (2000-10-06) & JP 2000 132122 A (FUJI PHOTO FILM CO LTD), 12 May 2000 (2000-05-12) abstract	1-8, 12, 13
X	WO 99 59101 A (E INK CORP) 18 November 1999 (1999-11-18) page 31, line 22 - page 32, line 19 page 34, line 4 - line 8 page 30, line 1 - line 23; figures 15, 16	14, 17-21
X	EP 0 790 617 A (DAINIPPON PRINTING CO LTD) 20 August 1997 (1997-08-20) column 4, line 7 - line 18 column 13, line 34 - column 15, line 43 figure 13	1-14
	-/-	

☒ Further documents are listed in the continuation of box C.

☒ Patent family members are listed in annex.

* Special categories of cited documents :

- *A* document defining the general state of the art which is not considered to be of particular relevance
- *E* earlier document but published on or after the international filing date
- *L* document which may throw doubts on priority claim(s) or which is cited to establish the publication date of another citation or other special reason (as specified)
- *O* document referring to an oral disclosure, use, exhibition or other means
- *P* document published prior to the international filing date but later than the priority date claimed

- *T* later document published after the international filing date or priority date and not in conflict with the application but cited to understand the principle or theory underlying the invention
- *X* document of particular relevance; the claimed invention cannot be considered novel or cannot be considered to involve an inventive step when the document is taken alone
- *Y* document of particular relevance; the claimed invention cannot be considered to involve an inventive step when the document is combined with one or more other such documents, such combination being obvious to a person skilled in the art.
- *&* document member of the same patent family

Date of the actual completion of the international search

8 October 2002

Date of mailing of the international search report

17/10/2002

Name and mailing address of the ISA

European Patent Office, P.B. 5818 Patentlaan 2
NL - 2280 HV Rijswijk
Tel. (+31-70) 340-2040, Tx. 31 651 epo nl,
Fax (+31-70) 340-3016

Authorized officer

Pantoja Conde, A

THIS PAGE BLANK (USPTO)

INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

International Application No
PCT/US 02/07545

C.(Continuation) DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT

Category *	Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages	Relevant to claim No.
A	PATENT ABSTRACTS OF JAPAN vol. 2000, no. 09, 13 October 2000 (2000-10-13) & JP 2000 162650 A (DAINIPPON SCREEN MFG CO LTD), 16 June 2000 (2000-06-16) abstract	1-23
A	WO 01 11424 A (KANAE NORIHIKO ;KAWAI HIDEYUKI (JP); SEIKO EPSON CORP (JP)) 15 February 2001 (2001-02-15) the whole document	1, 14, 23
A	US 5 508 720 A (DISANTO FRANK J ET AL) 16 April 1996 (1996-04-16) the whole document	1-23

INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

Information on patent family members

Inte Application No

PCT/US 02/07545

Patent document cited in search report		Publication date	Patent family member(s)	Publication date
JP 2000132122	A	12-05-2000	NONE	
WO 9959101	A	18-11-1999	AU 3987299 A	29-11-1999
			CA 2300827 A1	04-03-1999
			CA 2300830 A1	04-03-1999
			CA 2300849 A1	04-03-1999
			CA 2330950 A1	18-11-1999
			EP 1078331 A2	28-02-2001
			JP 2002514793 T	21-05-2002
			US 2002089735 A1	11-07-2002
			WO 9959101 A2	18-11-1999
			US 6252564 B1	26-06-2001
			US 6120839 A	19-09-2000
			US 6118426 A	12-09-2000
			US 6262706 B1	17-07-2001
			US 6017584 A	25-01-2000
			US 6177921 B1	23-01-2001
			US 6067185 A	23-05-2000
			US 6300932 B1	09-10-2001
			US 6232950 B1	15-05-2001
			US 6392785 B1	21-05-2002
			US 6249271 B1	19-06-2001
			US 2002018042 A1	14-02-2002
EP 0790617	A	20-08-1997	JP 9216680 A	19-08-1997
			JP 9216465 A	19-08-1997
			EP 0790617 A2	20-08-1997
			JP 9282838 A	31-10-1997
			TW 412744 B	21-11-2000
			US 2001007484 A1	12-07-2001
			US 6201587 B1	13-03-2001
JP 2000162650	A	16-06-2000	NONE	
WO 0111424	A	15-02-2001	AU 6316500 A	05-03-2001
			WO 0111424 A1	15-02-2001
			US 2001055000 A1	27-12-2001
US 5508720	A	16-04-1996	CA 2178804 A1	10-08-1995
			CN 1138385 A	18-12-1996
			EP 0742938 A1	20-11-1996
			JP 11504433 T	20-04-1999
			WO 9521441 A1	10-08-1995